



State of Illinois

JB Pritzker • Governor

Illinois Department of Transportation

Omer Osman • Secretary

Illinois State Police

Brendan F. Kelly • Director



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CONTACT:

Paul Wappel (IDOT) 217.685.0082

Maria Castaneda (IDOT) 312.447.1919

ISP.PIO.Personnel@illinois.gov 217.524.2500

This St. Patrick's Day, don't rely on luck: Be smart, be sober and buckle up

Law enforcement patrols planned for holiday weekend

SPRINGFIELD – St. Patrick's Day means celebrations across Illinois. It also means that the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is working with the Illinois State Police (ISP) and more than 200 local law enforcement agencies to help prevent impaired driving. No matter how you celebrate, make sure you and your friends stay safe this St. Patrick's Day by remembering: "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" and "Drive High - Get a DUI."

"If you're celebrating St. Patrick's Day with dyed beer or other green substances, your No. 1 priority is finding a sober driver before the festivities start," said Steve Travia, IDOT's Director of Highways and Chief Engineer. "Waiting until after you're impaired is too late. Plan ahead for a sober ride home to help ensure you and everyone else on the road get home safely."

Federal highway safety funds through IDOT are available to ISP and local law enforcement agencies for roadside safety checks, seat belt enforcement zones and saturation patrols to enforce impaired driving, seat belt usage, speeding, distracted driving and other traffic laws.

"Regardless of whether you're grabbing a couple pints or drinking Irish whiskey, don't count on luck to get you home safely," said ISP Division of Patrol Col. Margaret McGreal. "If you're out drinking, designate a sober driver, use a ride share or call a cab. Don't let your St. Patrick's Day celebration turn deadly."

There is no luck involved. Just follow these simple steps to enjoy a safe St. Patrick's Day.

If you are hosting a party:

- Remember, you can be held liable and prosecuted if someone you served is involved in an impaired driving crash.
- Make sure all of your guests designate their sober drivers in advance or help arrange ride sharing with other sober drivers.
- Serve plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages at the party.

If you are attending a party:

- Designate your sober driver before the party begins and give that person your car keys.
- If you don't have a designated driver, ask a sober family member or friend for a ride home or call a cab, take public transportation or use a ride-sharing service.
- Never let a friend leave your sight if you think they are about to drive impaired.
- Always buckle up – it's your best defense against an impaired driver.

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